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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council extends suspension of certain economic sanctions against Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for 75 days; China and Russian Federation abstain from voting on resolution.

+ Secretary-General arrives in Jakarta after brief stopover in Singapore; to hold talks with Indonesian President tomorrow.

+ UNHCR deplores forcible closure of camps for internally displaced persons in Rwanda; Special Representative meets with Vice-President after Government troops kill 16 in Kibeho.

+ Nuclear-weapon States provided weapons materials and technology to Israel in violation of NPT, Iran tells Review and Extension Conference.

+ Secretary-General sets out plan for implementation of UNCRO mandate; says there is enough common ground between Croatian parties for success, but situation could deteriorate quickly.

+ Special Representative Akashi reports no progress towards extending Bosnian cessation of hostilities agreement; warns alternative could be full-scale resumption of war.

+ Bosnian Government says there is no reason to believe its soldiers were involved in killings of two French peace-keepers last weekend.

+ General Assembly authorizes Economic and Social Council to decide on pending proposals for accreditation of NGOs to Beijing Women's Conference.

+ Compensation Commission says it cannot honour recent awards for damages resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; warns lack of resources will undermine credibility of United Nations.

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The Security Council today extended its suspension of certain economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

For information media—not an official record

for 75 days. Restrictions on air travel, maritime traffic, sporting events and cultural exchanges were originally suspended by resolution 943 (1994) for 100 days, provided that the border between the Federal Republic and Bosnia and Herzegovina were closed. The suspension was extended for another 100 days by resolution 970 (1995).

The Council took today's action by adopting resolution 988 (1995) by thirteen votes in favour to none against, with China and the Russian Federation abstaining. It noted the measures taken by the Federal Republic to maintain the closure of its border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, but expressed concern about reports suggesting that helicopter flights might have crossed the border. The Council noted that those reports were being investigated by the Mission of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY), and called on the Federal Republic to cooperate fully with that investigation.

The Council confirmed that commodities and products, including fuel beyond immediate needs, should not be carried on flights and ferry services permitted in accordance with resolution 943 (1994). It reminded States of the importance of strict enforcement of measures imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter. The Council requested that the Secretary-General report to it every 30 days on the Federal Republic's closure of the border and its compliance with relevant requirements. If the Federal Republic did not continue to close the border, or permitted substantial diversion of goods through Croatia, the suspension of sanctions would terminate within five days, unless the Council decided otherwise.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia, this morning after a brief stopover in Singapore, and was received by President Soeharto. Tomorrow, he will have talks with the President on Indonesia's relations with the United Nations, its chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement, the question of East Timor, and the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

Tomorrow afternoon, the Secretary-General will address the Foreign Affairs Forum of the Indonesian Foreign Ministry, and the National Youth Forum on Environment. Mr. and Mrs. Boutros-Ghali will later attend a state dinner in their honour. They will travel to Bandung on Sunday.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has deplored the forcible closure of camps for internally displaced persons in Rwanda. In a statement issued today, the agency warned of a catastrophe unless urgent assistance was delivered to more than 100,000 people who had regrouped on a hill after being driven from the Kibeho camp. Following the release of the statement, the Rwandese Government authorized humanitarian agencies to deliver assistance to the displaced persons.

(more)

In another development, Rwandese forces opened fire on displaced persons in Kibeho yesterday -- killing 16 and injuring 44 -- after one attempted to take a rifle from a soldier. Special Representative Shahryar Khan went to the camp this morning in an effort to deal with the situation. He also met with Vice-President Paul Kagame.

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Nuclear-weapon States have generously provided weapons materials and technology to Israel in violation of the NPT, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told the 1995 Review and Extension Conference today. He said it was inconceivable that the regimes in Israel and South Africa could have acquired their weapons systems without the acquiescence of nuclear-weapon States. When all aspects of the NPT were implemented, it should be extended indefinitely. In the meantime, the only viable option was an extension consistent with the goal of ensuring the early realization of outstanding provisions.

The representative of Uzbekistan said indefinite extension was one of the most reliable ways to guarantee a secure world. He called for a strengthening of the non-proliferation regime through the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Uzbekistan had already called for such a zone for Central Asia.

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There is enough common ground between the Government of Croatia and the local Serb authorities to make possible the implementation of Security Council resolution 981 (1995), according to the Secretary-General. That resolution established the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO). In a report dated 18 April, he set out his plan for the implementation of the Operation's mandate, envisaging a total deployment of 8,750 troops by 30 June.

The Secretary-General stressed that the situation on the ground was volatile and that it could quickly deteriorate if all concerned did not exercise responsibility. In spite of their serious political differences, both parties were aware that the alternative was more violence and a resumption of war. However, they had not formally accepted the plan for UNCRO, and there was a risk that they would not cooperate with the Operation. The Secretary-General added that in those circumstances, it was not without misgivings that he had submitted his proposals to the Council.

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There has been no appreciable movement in the positions of the Bosnian parties on the extension of the cessation of hostilities agreement beyond 30 April, according to Special Representative Yasushi Akashi. However, he stressed that he would continue his efforts to secure an extension, as the alternative might be a full-scale resumption of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(more)

Mr. Akashi had meetings with the parties in Sarajevo and Pale yesterday and today. He reported that the Government would only agree to an extension of the agreement if the Bosnian Serbs accepted the Contact Group's plan. However, the Bosnian Serb leadership would only do so on the basis of the current confrontation lines.

Meanwhile, there was very heavy fighting in the Posavina corridor and in the hills north of Tuzla. The Croatian Serbs and the forces loyal to Fikret Abdic continued to battle Bosnian Government troops in the north of the Bihac pocket, although Sarajevo was relatively quiet. In Croatia, one child was killed and two were severely injured when four mortar rounds landed in Sector North-East.

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There is no basis to believe that any Bosnian soldiers were involved in the killings of two French peace-keepers in Sarajevo last weekend, according to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a letter to the Security Council President dated 18 April, it said it had no choice but to accept that the United Nations investigation into the killings had proved inconclusive. However, that inconclusiveness did not render the two Bosnian sides equally blameworthy. The Government could not accept the reckless speculation and innuendoes of some political figures allocating guilt to it.

The letter distinguished between political leaderships which lacked the necessary will to respond to aggression and ethnic cleansing, and United Nations personnel who were attempting to mitigate suffering. It said those leaderships had increasingly resorted to rationalizing their lack of will. The Bosnian Government appreciated the help it had received, and offered its sincerest condolences to the families of the two peace-keepers and to the French Government.

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The General Assembly today authorized the Economic and Social Council to decide on all pending proposals for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the Conference preparatory process. The Assembly took that action in a resolution adopted by 86 votes in favour to none against, with China abstaining. The text had been approved by the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Assembly extended the deadline for NGOs to submit applications for accreditation to the Conference to 28 April. It requested that the Conference inform NGOs that had not been recommended for accreditation of the reasons for the denial. The organizations concerned would then be given a chance to provide additional information on their qualifications.

In explanation of vote, China said the Organization was setting a disturbing precedent, legally and procedurally, by turning the Economic and

Social Council into a body which undertook operations of its subordinate organs. The practice of politicizing and complicating accreditation was inconsistent with the principles of the Charter.

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The United Nations Compensation Commission has so far approved more than 220,000 individual claims under three special categories for damages resulting from Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait. Those claims were worth more than $870 million, according to a letter from the Commission's Governing Council to the President of the Security Council.

The Governing Council said claims approved at its sixteenth session for departure from Iraq or Kuwait (category A) and for serious injury or death (category B) could not yet be paid. It cited, among other reasons, the lack of resources in the Compensation Fund; the continuation of the embargo against Iraq; the failure to secure access to certain frozen funds or to receive a share of the value of impounded Iraqi oil; and the non-implementation of Security Council resolutions 706 (1992) and 712 (1992).

The Compensation Commission was undertaking an historic task which contributed to international peace and security by demonstrating the capacity of the United Nations to render justice, the letter said. However, the lack of resources to pay awards would have negative implications for the credibility of the Commission, and ultimately for the United Nations system. Several members of the Commission expected that the Security Council would find appropriate solutions so that awards could be honoured.

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